



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the NEH?

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is an independent federal agency created in 1965. It is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. Because democracy demands wisdom, the NEH serves and strengthens our republic by promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans. The Endowment accomplishes this mission by awarding grants for top-rated proposals examined by panels of independent, external reviewers.

The NEH grants typically go to cultural institutions, such as museums, archives, libraries, colleges, universities, public television, and radio stations, and to individual scholars. The grants:

- strengthen teaching and learning in schools and colleges,
- facilitate research and original scholarship,
- provide opportunities for lifelong learning,
- preserve and provide access to cultural and educational resources,
- strengthen the institutional base of the humanities.

What are the humanities?

"The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study and interpretation of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life." -National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965

Who is eligible for NEH funding?

Eligible organizations: Any U.S. nonprofit organization with IRS tax-exempt status is eligible, as are state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. Eligible institutions include but are not limited to public, school, academic, and research libraries; museums; disciplinary and professional associations; cultural institutions; state humanities councils; and institutions of higher learning.

The NEH generally does not award grants to other federal entities or to applicants whose projects are so closely intertwined with a federal entity that the project takes on characteristics of the federal entity's own authorized activities. This does not preclude applicants from using grant funds from, or sites and materials controlled by, other federal entities in their projects.

Eligible individuals: include researchers, teachers, and writers, whether they have an institutional affiliation or not. For Research grants, applicants must have completed their formal education by the application deadline. While applicants need not have advanced degrees, individuals currently enrolled in a degree-granting program are ineligible to apply. Applicants who have satisfied all the requirements for a degree and are awaiting its conferral may apply, but such applicants need a letter from the dean of the conferring school, attesting to the applicant's status.

I applied for a grant last year and my proposal was unsuccessful. Will I be at a disadvantage if I reapply?

No. NEH encourages previous applicants to reapply and does not inform panelists that a proposal was unsuccessful in a previous competition. Moreover, NEH employs different panelists from year to year, so a new set of eyes will be evaluating your proposal.

Can I see the evaluators' comments after the competition?

Yes. The notification you receive about the decision made on your application will contain instructions for requesting the evaluators' comments. If your application is unsuccessful, the comments may help you revise it for resubmission.

Can I submit a draft in advance of my application?

Yes (for most grant programs). NEH program officers will read drafts and offer comments on draft applications submitted at least six weeks prior to the grant deadline (to ensure enough time for review). Drafts should be sent via email or fax—do not submit drafts via grants.gov. You may also contact program officers at any stage in the process with questions. NEH staff will help potential grantees choose the right grant program for their project, answer questions about application requirements, and provide suggestions to improve projects and applications. Staff members are not able to read draft applications in the Fellowships and Summer Stipends competitions.

When should I upload my application to Grants.gov?

NEH strongly suggests that you submit your application no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the day of the deadline. Doing so will leave you time to contact the Grants.gov help desk for support, should you encounter a technical problem of some kind. The Grants.gov help desk is now available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day (except on federal holidays), at 1-800-518-4726. You can also send an e-mail message to support@grants.gov.

About your institution's DUNS number:

What is a DUNS number?

DUNS stands for "data universal numbering system." DUNS numbers are issued by Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) and consist of nine digits.

Do all grant applications have to have a DUNS number?

Only institutional applicants are required to provide a DUNS number. Individuals are exempt.

I am a project director. How do I find out my institution's DUNS number?

You should ask your institution's grant administrator or chief financial officer to provide your institution's DUNS number. Research universities and most colleges, independent libraries, and large organizations already have DUNS numbers.

What happens if my institution does not have a DUNS number?

The chief financial officer or authorizing official of your institution will need to register for a DUNS number. The project director should NOT apply for a number. There are two ways to obtain a DUNS number. Your institution can use the special toll-free number for federal grant applicants: 1-866-705-5711. The process will take about ten minutes and your institution will receive a DUNS number within a couple business days. Your institution can also register for a DUNS number via Dun & Bradstreet's website at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. Please note that registration via the website may take up to thirty business days to complete.

Is there a fee for registering for a DUNS number?

No. D&B should not charge you a fee. You are also not obligated to purchase their products.

How do I know if I have submitted my application successfully?

After you submit your application, you should receive four e-mail messages confirming receipt of your application. To ensure that your application is properly processed, please verify that you have received all four confirmations.

1. Grants.gov Submission Receipt;
2. Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt;
3. Grants.gov Grantor Agency Retrieval Receipt; and
4. NEH Confirmation Receipt.

The first three e-mail messages are from Grants.gov and are normally sent within twenty- four hours of the submission; delays can, however, occur when system usage is heavy. Each message includes your application's Grants.gov tracking number. Keep these messages for your records.

If you do not receive all three messages from Grants.gov, or if the messages indicate that the application has been rejected, contact Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) at 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726) or support@grants.gov. Include the Grants.gov tracking number in correspondence regarding the application.

The fourth e-mail message is from NEH and assigns your application an NEH tracking number, which is different from your Grants.gov tracking number. You will receive this e- mail message within ten business days after the application deadline.

If I receive NEH funding, may I also accept funding from other sources?

Yes. Applicants are encouraged to seek funding from diverse sources. Submitting proposals to other funders has no bearing on how NEH reviews proposals. We do ask that you tell us about those applications, so that we can better understand the project's funding situation.